

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-09 INR-10 L-03

NEA-10 NSAE-00 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 GAC-01 USIA-12

TRSE-00 MBFR-03 SAJ-01 H-02 NSC-10 SS-14 INRE-00

ACDA-19 IO-12 EB-11 OMB-01 RSR-01 /150 W

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P R 021840 Z APR 73

FM USMISSION NATO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9590

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS 2832

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USNMR SHAPE

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 1626

E. O. 11652: GDS, 12/31/79

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: EC DISCUSSIONS OF MBFR

CENNA FOR USDEL MBFR

SUMMARY: WE WERE BRIEFED BY AN ITALIAN PARTICIPANT IN THE MARCH 30 MEETING OF EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS. HE SAID THAT EC DISCUSSIONS OF MBFR WILL CONTINUE AT NEXT POLITICAL DIRECTORS' MEETING APRIL 25 AND WILL BE CONCERNED WITH THOSE ASPECTS OF MBFR WHICH BEAR ON FUTURE WESTERN EUROPEAN INTEGRATION. END SUMMARY.

1. DISCUSSION AT MARCH 30 POLITICAL DIRECTORS' MEETING WAS BASED ON ITALIAN PAPER, MAIN POINTS OF WHICH WERE:

A. THERE IS A NEED TO HELP THE U. S. WITH ITS DOMESTIC CRITICS BY ALLOWING FOR A REDUCTION OF U. S. TROOP STRENGTH IN EUROPE THROUGH MBFR;

B. MBFR SHOULD INVOLVE A REDUCTION ONLY OF U. S. AND SOVIET STATIONED FORCES. U. S. FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED

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ONLY TO THAT EXTENT CONSISTENT WITH EUROPEAN SECURITY;

C. THERE SHOULD BE NO REDUCTION OF EUROPEAN- NATIONAL FORCES,

EASTERN OR WESTERN.

2. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCE, FRANCE AGREED WITH ITALIAN POSITION. FRANCE ALSO SAID THAT IT WOULD NO LONGER POSE OBJECTIONS TO MBFR NEGOTIATIONS. (ITALY SEES THIS AS A STEP BEYOND POSITION SCHUMAN TOOK AT DECEMBER 1972 MINISTERIAL.) UK ALSO AGREED WITH ITALIAN POSITION. NETHERLANDS AGREED, THOUGH WISHED TO HOLD OUT POSSIBILITY OF INDIGENOUS FORCE REDUCTION IN SECOND OR THIRD PHASE OF MBFR. BELGIUM DID NOT SPEAK. FRG DID NOT DISAGREE BUT WAS RESERVED.

3. AS TO FUTURE ACTIVITIES, WE WERE INFORMED THAT EC-9 AGREES:
-- ALL MILITARY ASPECTS OF MBFR SHOULD BE DISCUSSED IN NATO;
-- EC-9 SHOULD DISCUSS ONLY THOSE ASPECTS OF MBFR WHICH BEAR ON FUTURE WESTERN EUROPEAN INTEGRATION. WHEN ASKED FOR EXAMPLES OF WHAT THIS MIGHT INVOLVE, OUR INFORMANT POINTED OUT THAT RESTRICTIONS ON SIZE INDIGENOUS FORCES COULD ALSO IMPLY LIMITATION ON DEFENSE BUDGET. RESTRICTIONS ON MOVEMENT OF FORCES MAY MEAN THAT FRENCH FORCES CANNOT GO INTO FRG, NOR ITALIAN FORCES INTO FRANCE. BOTH CONTINGENCIES HAVE IMPLICATIONS FOR DEFENSE POLICY OF A FUTURE UNITED WESTERN EUROPE, AND COULD GIVE THE SOVIETS A BASIS FOR INTERFERING IN THAT POLICY.

4. ITALIANS UNDERTOOK TO PREPARE A FURTHER PAPER ON MBFR FURTHER EXPANDING ON POINTS COVERED IN MARCH 30 DISCUSSION, AS A BASIS FOR CONSIDERATION AT THE NEXT EC POLITICAL DIRECTORS' MEETING ON APRIL 25. WE ARE TOLD THAT DA RIN OR PETRIGNANI WILL WRITE THE PAPER FOR ITALY.

5. COMMENT: ON BASIS OF THIS BRIEFING, IT APPEARS THAT AT LEAST SOME EC COUNTRIES ARE INTENT ON HAVING THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS' DEAL WITH SOME FAIRLY IMPORTANT MBFR POLICY QUESTIONS. WE SUSPECT THAT THERE WILL BE SOME STRONG OPPOSITION AMONG OTHER EC COUNTRIES TO THIS DEVELOPMENT EVEN IF IT IS PRESENTED AS A DEVICE TO ENCOURAGE A MORE FORTHCOMING FRENCH POSITION ON MBFR, OR TO ADVANCE EUROPEAN UNITY. IN ADDITION, CANADA OR TURKEY WILL LIKELY MAKE ISSUE OF PRINCIPLE OF THE FACT THAT THE EC IS DISCUSSING MBFR OUTSIDE THE NATO CONTEXT. WE DO NOT THINK IT NECESSARY FOR THE US TO TAKE A DEFINITIVE POSITION NOW ON THIS ISSUE, CERTAINLY IN AB

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